

# CE-Crocker - Newsletter

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## 2008: The Best of Times, The Worst of Times

"Soar: to ascend to a higher or more exalted level."

"Crash: to decline suddenly and steeply."

2008 brought it all. Promise. Volatility. Fickleness. Extremes.

We saw fertilizer, grain, milk, fuel and more soar to record high prices, only to see them come crashing down as the world economy

and stock markets fell. Record profits. Bankruptcies. Hope. Despair.

We witnessed and lived wild price fluctuations that most of us have never experienced before. It also created opportunities for some farms to achieve financial gain in 2008 and lock in some high commodity prices for 2009.

One thing is certain. 2009 will be challenging for us all,

but the definition of optimism should always include the word '*agriculture*'!



## Corn Facts:

- An ear of corn averages 800 kernels in 16 rows
- A pound of corn consists of approximately 1300 kernels
- Corn is produced on every continent of the world with the exception of Antarctica

## Wolf Trax DDP® Micronutrients:

### The latest technology for optimum distribution and root uptake

Wolf Trax DDP® Micronutrients are a dry fertilizer coating that provides superior distribution and improved plant uptake. Wolf Trax micronutrients are uniquely formulated to coat and adhere to each prill of dry N, P, or K fertilizer. This ensures even distribution throughout the blend, and more consistent and even application across the field.

Granular micronutrients added to the macronutrient blend of N, P and K may be sparsely or unevenly applied

throughout the field, making it longer and harder for the crop to "find" them. The innovative Wolf Trax micros are applied as a coating on the granular, prilled fertilizer, making them available to the crop the instant the crop reaches the nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium fertilizer. This equal distribution allows balanced root to nutrient contact. No longer do you need to worry about micronutrient distribution and availability being "hit and miss".

Each fertilizer granule is coated with the micronutrient. Once it is coated it will not come off.

CE-Crocker will have zinc, boron, manganese, and copper Wolf Trax products available for the 2009 season. These products may also be applied by foliar application. Visit [www.wolftrax.com](http://www.wolftrax.com), or ask your CE-Crocker sales representative for more information.

## Give your Soybeans a Treat and Optimize your Yields!

CE-Crocker has installed a new soybean treater and inoculator in our new seed warehouse in Stafford. Optimize® with LCO Promoter Technology® is a unique, proven inoculation for soybeans. Achieve season-long benefits provided by Optimize including enhanced root system and nodule development, improved vigor, stand and emergence, faster canopy closure, and earlier and increased pod set.

This all provides the opportunity to “optimize” plant health and increase yields. For more information on Optimize®, visit their website at

[www.emdcropbioscience.com](http://www.emdcropbioscience.com).

By adding Gaucho®600 insecticide and Trilex 2000 fungicide along with your inoculant you can give your soybeans the early season disease and insect protection that without can be so devastating. You wouldn't risk planting corn without insecticide protection, so why would you risk your soybeans? With a total estimated cost of \$16.80/acre for inoculation, fungicide, and insecticide, seed treatment doesn't cost you money- *it saves you money!*

Let CE-Crocker apply these treatments

directly to your seed for you. Our calibrated, modern equipment allows us to apply the products accurately and evenly. Do you have the time and expertise to be sure you are not over-applying (\$ wasted), under applying (yield and \$ loss), or applying unequally to the seed (yield and \$ loss)? It makes “cents” to have CE-Crocker make this application for you.

**If you purchased your soybean seed in bulk totes, contact us if you would like your seed treated and inoculated.**

(sorry, we cannot do bagged seed)

## What's New in 2009?

*“Without continual growth and progress, such words as ‘improvement’, ‘achievement’, and ‘success’ have no meaning.”~Benjamin Franklin*

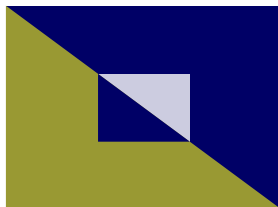
It has been said that “the key to success is often the ability to adapt”. That rings very true in agriculture. That is also what has helped the Crocker family grow and survive for over 75 years now. And we continue to try to make the necessary changes and growth to help position us to meet the challenges and customer demands that await in the future.

This past fall we constructed a new seed warehouse at our Stafford facility to house our growing Pioneer and other seed products. We have also installed a new soybean inoculator and treater inside the new building.

We recently received delivery of our new feed auger trailer for the cornmeal

business. We are extremely pleased with this new piece of equipment. It allows us to offer even more timely and reliable service.

New to our business is another AG Chemical Sprayer. The purchase of this sprayer adds one more sprayer to our fleet to help improve our service and timeliness. CE-Crocker has also added an additional three-hopper tri-axle dry delivery truck, two more road tractors, and a new equipment trailer to better serve our customers.



Two hunters were dragging their dead deer back to their car. Another hunter approached, pulling his along, too. “Hey, I don't want to tell you how to do something...but I can tell you it's much easier if you drag the deer in the other direction. Then the antlers won't dig into the ground.” After the hunter left, the two decided to try it. A little while later one hunter said to the other, “You know, that guy was right! This is a lot easier!”

“Yeah, but we're getting farther from the truck”, the other added.

## Don't be fooled...A pound of P is a pound of P!

With the current fertilizer markets, particularly the high price of liquid phosphorus, many growers are re-valuating their fertility programs. Some are searching for alternatives, or are considering the possibility of cutting rates and mining the soil. Many articles have been written on this subject. Many advertising dollars have been spent promoting products. We like to refer to the articles written by neutral, or unbiased authors, rather than the ones promoting "miracle" products.

Agronomist John P Smith wrote in a technical bulletin from 2/25/09:

"There are a few 'rules' we need to keep in mind with Phosphorus nutrition:

1. A pound of P is a pound of P.
2. Crop removal values do not change with changing fertilizer or grain prices.
3. Corn removes 0.37# of  $P_2O_5$ /bu. And soybeans remove 0.8# of  $P_2O_5$ /bu.
4. Corn and Soybeans 'recognize'  $P_2O_5$ , they have no idea that it was supplied as liquid or dry; ortho or poly.
5. The general rule for soils in the Eastern Cornbelt is that it takes 10 lbs of  $P_2O_5$  to raise the soil test value 1 lb/acre. 10 lbs of crop removal will reduce the soil test value by 1."

His answer, in part, to the following question: "Given these 'rules' above, is there a place for pop-up fertilizer, and

more specifically, the use of an orthophosphate pop-up fertilizer?" "The answer can be 'yes', if we use it as PART of a phosphorus fertility program. Two to three gallons/acre of these products will not provide the same amount of nutrient as 150-200 lbs/acre of MAP or DAP".

The next question, "But these products are being marketed as orthophosphates, and as such are plant available, so doesn't that change the 'rules' above?" was answered with, "No, the fact that the  $P_2O_5$  is in the orthophosphate form means it is in the plant available form, but what they fail to tell you is that it is also in the form that soils complex. When your MAP and DAP granules break down, they also release orthophosphate. Whether you are applying phosphorus in a liquid or dry form, it

**"...it takes 10lbs of  $P_2O_5$  to raise the soil test value 1lb/acre."**

takes 10 lbs of  $P_2O_5$  to raise the soil test value one lb/acre. When we consider crop removal, soil test

values decrease one lb/acre for each 10 lbs of removal. So, if part of the sales pitch is that soil test values do not decrease, make sure the grower understands the 1:10 relationship with soil test values vs. crop removal."

Following is an edited article, written by Dr. Rob Mikkelson, Director, Western North American Region International Plant Nutrition Institute that appeared in the July 2007 International Plant Nutrition Institute Insights:

**Can Low Analysis Fertilizers Help?** I recently received a testimonial for a special fertilizer where a few

pounds of a product with N- $P_2O_5$ - $K_2O$  analysis of 8-2-2 was claimed to meet all the nutritional needs for 10 acres of crops! It bothers me that some educated people continue to believe these claims and provide a market for these products...

...Consider for a moment that 2 lb of such a low-analysis fertilizer will provide about 3 oz. of N, and 1 oz. of  $P_2O_5$  and  $K_2O$  spread over the entire 10 acres. Then compare this with the removal of over 1,000 lb N, 500 lb  $P_2O_5$ , and 400 lb  $K_2O$  in corn grain...or a high yield potato crop on this 10 acres will remove 2,000 lb N, 300 lb  $P_2O_5$ , and over 2,000 lb  $K_2O$ . Think about the cost of some of these products and the amount of nutrients in a small container and it just does not add up!...

...It might be great if manure composted in cow horns, home-brewed compost tea, or bat guano could meet the nutritional needs of large-scale food production, but this can never be the case.

Perhaps we are always on the lookout for short cuts or simpler routes to achieve consistently high yields. Unfortunately, there are no ways to violate the laws of nature and science. You can't grow a successful crop without providing the basic building blocks for the plant. This includes maintaining soil conditions, adequate water, and proper nutrition. When you hear that someone has a totally new concept for providing for the health of your crop, approach it with some initial skepticism and ask for documentation.

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***Serving Agriculture for over 75 years***

Information contained herein was obtained from multiple sources and publications. Changing commodity, fertilizer, &/or chemical markets may make some information outdated or obsolete.

**Thank you for choosing  
CEC! Best Wishes for a  
safe & successful 2009!**

## Where Does My Phosphate Come From?

Phosphate rock is mined from the ground in South-Central Florida. This rock is found 25-40 feet below ground in a mixture of phosphate pebbles, sand, and clay. Enormous electric draglines, weighing 7 million pounds, separate and remove the rock in the first of many steps of cleaning and separating the phosphate mineral.

Once the phosphate has undergone these extensive steps at the processing facility, the phosphate mineral is stacked on a large inventory pile to eventually be transported by rail to a separate manufacturing plant. Once at this plant, the rock must be converted into water-soluble form. The rock is finely ground to a uniform size and sulfuric acid is then added to form phosphoric acid. This highly concentrated form (through evaporation) is reacted with ammonia and granulated to produce monoammonium phosphate (MAP) and diammonium phosphate (DAP).

The phosphate industry is Florida's third largest industry, after tourism and agriculture. Central Florida's "Bone Valley" produces 75% of the phosphate U.S. farmers require, and 25% of the world's supply.

For other interesting phosphate facts, visit [www.phosphateflorida.com](http://www.phosphateflorida.com).

An Amish boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and then slide back together again.

The boy asked "What is this, Father?" The father (never having seen an elevator) responded, "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my life, I don't know what it is."

While the boy and father were watching with amazement, a rather heavy, not too attractive, older lady walked up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady stepped inside into a small room.

The walls closed and they watched the small numbers above the walls light up sequentially until it reached the last number, and continued to watch as the numbers lit up in reverse order.

Finally, the walls re-opened and a beautiful young woman stepped out. The father said quietly to his son, "Go get your mother." 😊

## **Don't be fooled...A pound of P is a pound of P! (cont.)**

Continued article written by Dr. Rob Mikkelson:

I marvel that people will eagerly buy the latest miracle product, but fail to sample the soil and to monitor their fields for fertility levels, pH, or nematodes. But remember the stink test; when something smells bad, there is usually a mess nearby. Proper crop nutrition plays a vital role in maintaining the world's food supply. **Use fertilizer appropriately to get the best results and don't be afraid to speak out for farming practices that are**

**such a benefit to humanity.** ■

And Ron Mulford, agronomist, University of Maryland, wrote in the Winter 2008 Fluid Journal the following: "Still Important: Starters on High P soils"...

"...some starter P is important for highest yields even when soil test P levels are high. Eliminating P in starters because of high P index values puts growers at a disadvantage through lower yields, particularly in high residue systems, and likely has negative implications for nitrogen-use efficiency." Mr.

Mulford also went on to note the advantages of banding over broadcasting and the importance of timing and soil conditions.

N must be "close to the emerging plant in the first crucial days after planting. Broadcast N is not the same and, like high P soil tests under high residue, cold soil conditions do not provide high enough N (or P) concentrations in the young plants' root zone to overcome soil environmental restrictions to nutrient uptake."

